

A GOVERNMENT-RUN HEALTH CARE PLAN WILL LIMIT THE CARE THAT AMERICANS CAN RECEIVE

(Mrs. MYRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I am a 9-year breast cancer survivor, and I believe that I'm alive today because I was able to access and get the early diagnostic tests that I needed.

In 1999 I knew something was wrong and I went to five doctors, had three mammograms, and they all said you're okay. Finally the sixth doctor said, Let's do an ultrasound. He found my cancer. Otherwise, who knows what would have happened?

Under a government health care system like they have in the U.K. and in Canada, I really wouldn't have had that opportunity to get those tests so quickly and they may have found out too late.

Survival rates for cancer in countries that have government systems are much lower. In the U.K. breast cancer survivor rates are 11 percent lower than they are here in the United States.

So we need to look at sensible policies. We need to not be creating a huge new program for health care that only limits the care that not only cancer patients but all Americans receive.

LET'S FIRST DO NO HARM; PROTECT THIS ECONOMY AND PROTECT THE WORLD'S GREATEST HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

(Mr. CULBERSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, we in Texas are very proud to be home of the Texas Medical Center, the world's greatest collection of medical institutions. I am proud to represent M.D. Anderson hospital, recognized around the world as the greatest cancer center in the world. And we in Texas understand better than I think almost anywhere else the importance of medical institutions that are driven by research, driven by the physicians, driven by the needs of patients and the desires of doctors. And we in Texas want simply to be left alone. We want Texans to run Texas.

The most important parts of anyone's life are our families and our health. And we want, as Texans, to make these decisions for ourselves. We need to be focusing as a Congress on protecting the magnificent health care system we have created, on encouraging job growth by giving small businesses tax credits, by allowing small businesses to pool their resources so they can negotiate with the big insurance carriers and bring down their rates. We need to focus on tort reform for doctors to protect them from frivo-

lous lawsuits, as we have in Texas, that has worked so well.

Let's first do no harm and protect this economy and protect the world's greatest health care system.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LUJÁN). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

WIPA AND PABSS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3325) to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to reauthorize for 1 year the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program and the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security program.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3325

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "WIPA and PABSS Reauthorization Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE WORK INCENTIVES PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 1149(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-20(d)) is amended by striking "2009" and inserting "2010".

SEC. 3. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY FOR BENEFICIARIES OF SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAM.

Section 1150(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-21(h)) is amended by striking "2009" and inserting "2010".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3325, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today I want to join with our colleagues on the Social Security Subcommittee and Mr. JOHNSON, our ranking member, in support of this reauthorization for 1 year. It is a 1-year ex-

tension of two programs that help Social Security and Social Security beneficiaries return to work.

The WIPA, the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance, program allows disability beneficiaries to get one-on-one assistance from community organizations to help them understand the rules and the effect they will have on their benefits if they return to work. The PABSS program, Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security, provides legal advocacy services to help beneficiaries get a job or keep their job. The disability advocates and the return-to-work experts have both testified before our subcommittee about the effectiveness of these programs and how they will help people return to the workplace.

The reason we are doing this today is because the authorization for these programs will expire in September. The bill extends for 1 year the programs with no changes while the committee considers a longer-term reauthorization. The bill does not increase government spending because it comes from the discretionary reserves of the Social Security Administration.

What this bill actually does extending these programs, Mr. Speaker, is it actually helps people who have been sick or disabled who want to go back to work and become no longer a recipient of these sorts of public assistance to do so. So I think it is not only a worthwhile enterprise in terms of what the Subcommittee on Social Security has done, but it also is something that will strengthen the vibrancy of our economy as people who have been disabled or sick can actually return to the workplace.

Today I join with my colleagues, SAM JOHNSON, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Social Security, and JIM MCDERMOTT, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support, in support of the "WIPA and PABSS Reauthorization Act of 2009." This bill will extend, for one year, two programs that provide critical assistance for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability beneficiaries who are seeking to return to work.

Both of these programs were originally established in the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, which passed Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support. Under the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program, the Social Security Administration (SSA) funds community-based organizations to provide personalized assistance to Social Security and SSI disability beneficiaries who want to work, to help these beneficiaries understand SSA's complex work incentive policies and the effect that working will have on their benefits. This program can help to reduce the fears many beneficiaries have about transitioning to employment.

Under the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) program, SSA awards grants to designated Protection and Advocacy Systems to provide legal advocacy services that beneficiaries need to secure, maintain, or regain employment. The PABSS program also provides beneficiaries

with information and advice about obtaining vocational rehabilitation and employment services.

The Subcommittee on Social Security has received extensive testimony from disability advocates, experts, and other stakeholders about the importance of these programs to increasing employment among disability beneficiaries.

SSA is currently authorized to spend \$23 million annually from its administrative budget to fund the WIPA program, and \$7 million annually to fund the PABSS program. However, the authorization for both programs expires on September 30, 2009.

This bill will extend the WIPA and PABSS programs for one year, with no changes, while the Committee considers a longer-term reauthorization. This 1-year extension will ensure that these programs can continue to provide disability beneficiaries with the assistance they need to seek employment. The bill does not increase government spending.

I urge your support for extending these important programs.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of passage of this important legislation and thank Mr. TANNER for bringing it up. He is doing a great job as the Social Security chairman.

You know, choosing to work shouldn't be a hard decision to make for someone receiving Supplemental Security, because they are Social Security disability benefits. But it is, and that is because the folks have to think about how their wages will impact their cash benefits or their access to health care.

With nearly unanimous support from both the House and Senate, almost 10 years ago Congress passed Ticket to Work and the Work Incentives Improvement Act, a law that was about helping those with disabilities to get back to work in order to support themselves and their families. The two grant programs we would reauthorize today were created as a part of that landmark legislation.

The Work Incentives Planning Assistance program funds community-based organizations to assist those receiving benefits to understand Social Security's complex rules and the effect of working on their benefits. Today, there are over 104 community-based cooperative agreements to ensure these services are available in all 50 States. Since the program began, over 350,000 people have been served.

One example is the Work Incentive Planning Assistance program of Easter Seals in north Texas, which serves 19 counties in the north Texas area, including my district. Thanks to their good work over the past 3 years, their staff experts have served 1,302 people, and 184 of them now still have jobs.

The Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security program funds 57 grant programs covering all 50 States. These programs served al-

most 2,500 people last year and helped those working or trying to work by responding to their questions and resolving potential disputes with their employer or with an agency providing them with return-to-work services.

The authorized funding level of \$30 million has remained constant since these programs were created. Should Congress not act, these programs would expire on September 30, 2009, and the funding would end.

While I support a 1-year extension of these two important programs, at a Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security hearing, we learned that Social Security's primary return-to-work program, Ticket to Work, really hasn't been working. Fortunately, we are beginning to see promising signs of success in the Ticket program since new regulations to fix it were implemented last summer.

Now, more than ever, how every taxpayer dollar is spent does matter. Programs that don't achieve results must be changed or must end. To that end, I look forward to working with Chairman Tanner and all the members of the committee to figure out how all return-to-work programs can achieve their goal of a job and self-sufficiency for those who choose to return to work. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. JOHNSON.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3325.

The Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program and the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security program play crucial roles in the lives of SSA's beneficiaries with disabilities.

The two programs enable these beneficiaries to make informed choices about work as well as providing them with the necessary services to successfully transition back into the workforce.

For instance, the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program helps guide them by providing important information about opportunities and resources that help them make an informed decision.

Importantly, these programs provide services, free of charge, to individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income.

A one year reauthorization will ensure that these vulnerable Americans may continue to receive guidance, support, and legal representation.

At a time of increased economic hardship across the country, it is vitally important that we not forget those most in need.

H.R. 3325 has strong bi-partisan support, as it should, and deserves overwhelming support when we vote in order to send a message to SSA beneficiaries with disabilities that they are not forgotten and we stand by their side.

Mr. TANNER. I have no other speakers and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3325.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS BUSINESS CENTER ACT OF 2009

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1803) to amend the Small Business Act to establish a Veterans Business Center program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1803

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Business Center Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. VETERANS BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

Section 32 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f), by inserting "(other than subsections (g), (h), and (i))" after "this section"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(g) VETERANS BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish a Veterans Business Center program within the Administration to provide entrepreneurial training and counseling to veterans in accordance with this subsection.

"(2) DIRECTOR.—The Administrator shall appoint a Director of the Veterans Business Center program, who shall implement and oversee such program and who shall report directly to the Associate Administrator for Veterans Business Development.

"(3) DESIGNATION OF VETERANS BUSINESS CENTERS.—The Director shall establish by regulation an application, review, and notification process to designate entities as veterans business centers for purposes of this section. The Director shall make publicly known the designation of an entity as a veterans business center and the award of a grant to such center under this subsection.

"(4) FUNDING FOR VETERANS BUSINESS CENTERS.—

"(A) INITIAL GRANTS.—The Director is authorized to make a grant (hereinafter in this subsection referred to as an 'initial grant') to each veterans business center each year for not more than 5 years in the amount of \$200,000.

"(B) GROWTH FUNDING GRANTS.—After a veterans business center has received 5 years of initial grants under subparagraph (A), the Director is authorized to make a grant (hereinafter in this subsection referred to as a 'growth funding grant') to such center each year for not more than 3 years in the amount of \$150,000. After such center has received 3 years of growth funding grants, the Director shall require such center to meet performance benchmarks established by the Director to be eligible for growth funding grants in subsequent years.

"(5) CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES.—Each veterans business center receiving a grant under this subsection shall use the funds primarily on veteran entrepreneurial development, counseling of veteran-owned small businesses through one-on-one instruction and classes, and providing government procurement assistance to veterans.

"(6) MATCHING FUNDS.—Each veterans business center receiving a grant under this subsection shall be required to provide a non-